



Queen Elizabeth's Hospital



Berkeley Place, Clifton, Bristol, BS8 1JX

Tel: 0117 930 3040

Fax: 0117 929 3106

Email: headmaster@qehbristol.co.uk

Web: www.qehbristol.co.uk

Linked Schools: [Queen Elizabeth's Hospital Juniors](#)

A mainstream independent school for boys aged from 11 to 18.

Pupils: 560 boys

Age: 11-18

Religion: Non-denom

Fees: £3,184

Open days: A Saturday in mid-October

- [Result Analysis](#)
- [Inspection report](#)
- [Self-portrait](#)
- [SEN](#)
- [Features](#)

The Good Schools Guide Review 2008

Head

Since 2000, Mr Stephen Holliday MA (forties), educated at Batley Grammar School, Yorkshire, then Jesus College, Cambridge (where he obtained 1st class honours in history). Spent two years with British Rail before shunting himself to Dean Close, Cheltenham for six years (including three as housemaster) followed by four years at Giggleswick as head of history before deputy headship at Queen Elizabeth's Grammar School, Blackburn. Wife, head of geography at Colston's Girls' and two 'sporty' sons at QEH. Teaches PSHE to all of year 7 and GCSE history. Methodist lay preacher but 'doesn't wear religion on his sleeve,' say staff. A 'straightforward man' - welcoming and a good listener - 'what you see is what you get', say parents. Loves QEH and likely to stay a while. Aware of the political and other pressures in city but confident that QEH will hold its own in face of massive investment in local state provision. Strong business streak - currently savouring success of joint development with Bristol City FC on Failand sports field. He enjoys skiing and 'escaping' in holidays.

Academic Matters

Results consistently outstanding: 80+ per cent average A/B grades at A level over past three years and 60+ per cent A*/A at GCSE (harder IGCSE for English and maths included). Emphasis on quality rather than quantity - maximum nine subjects sat at GCSE and generally three at A level (though 'one boy currently being asked for 5A grades to read economics at UCL' we were told). Sciences and maths very strong; drama and theatre studies outstanding; Spanish appears most successful foreign language. Popularity of government and politics doesn't seem to have detracted from success in history. Large numbers also take geography. Design and technology is only taught to GCSE. Success in Latin and economics point to school's academic breadth. Individual achievements recognised and valued across all year groups. Regular target setting for boys and frequent reporting to parents leave little scope for backsliding. All do three sciences to end of year 9 and after that choose dual or triple award at GCSE. GCSE options include Latin (compulsory in years 7 and 8), drama, art, ceramics, Greek and Spanish. Lots of ICT. General studies programme in sixth covers topics such as finance at university. Boys generally rate their teachers highly - 'especially some of the younger ones'. New SENCo - learning support seen as increasingly important in this selective school. NFER screening for SpLD. A few overseas boys have ESL support; other special needs include hearing impairments, several ADD, mild cerebral palsy and Aspergers.

Games, Options, the Arts

Very sporty. Main off site activity at Failand - QEH sports field with changing and pavilion some ten minutes away (depending on time of day) by coach. Envious facilities developing apace in partnership with Bristol FC. All boys play rugby to end of year 9 then some choose football. Diversification of sports as boys move up school. A2 boys not forced to continue games but most do. Cricket and athletics strongest options in summer. Lots selected for Bristol rugby and/or Gloucestershire cricket teams with some rugby players competing nationally at U16 and U18 levels. Swimming and tennis have to be played for time being at outside facilities. Plans for new sports hall and swimming pool on site of present gym

complex, currently used for PE, basketball and badminton plus squash (two courts), fitness and weights.

Wide range of extra-curricular activities and clubs at lunchtime and after school. Boys not discouraged from pursuing own outside interests (e.g. pistol shooting, cycling, rowing etc). Impressive programme of visits abroad, from visiting Roman Pompeii to the choir in the United States and rugby players just about anywhere you'll find an oval ball. D of E popular and 150 boys involved in outdoor pursuits eg 3 teams in Ten Tors (to our amazement school bursar can be found leading these boys across Dartmoor: 'no-one has ever dropped out,' he asserts proudly). Hugely successful at local and national debating and public speaking competitions. Flourishing Young Enterprise teams and past winners of European Youth Parliament competition. Strong links with local community enhance work experience scheme.

Music is important: many boys playing instruments (a lot also have lessons outside school). Suite of practice rooms and three classrooms including music technology; largest space used for informal (e.g. jazz and acoustic) concerts. School rated locally for its contribution to choral music (one boy in national youth choir); regular slot in Lord Mayor's chapel; sell-out events in Bristol and Clifton cathedrals; regular overseas tours with Red Maids. Trickle of boys to music at universities, Drama is hugely popular -- productions of all kinds throughout year. On-site theatre ('the most vibrant in the west') seats 220 - heavily used by school and touring companies. New drama teaching space being created in main building. We visited during reading week - homework for younger boys is suspended in favour of literature with follow-up activities. Good library and adjacent careers room is well maintained. Art department housed in former gym: lofty main studio; separate ceramics area. Applemacs and digital photography replacing older dark room. Sixth form achieving high standards. Scope for more art to be displayed around school.

Background and Atmosphere

Only all boys' independent school left in Bristol. Motto: *Dum tempus habemus operemur bonum* (Whilst we have time let us do good). School charter and grant of arms given by Elizabeth I. Envious tradition of scholarship established over four centuries. Strong competitive edge - Crispin shield for sport most coveted trophy according to boys we met. Main building (grade 2 listed) towers (literally) on slope below posh Clifton and close to university. Sense of foreboding on approach -- boys love the 'Hogwarts' feel of the place. Within, an impressive stone staircase rises to 'headmaster's landing' - huge flagstones and ubiquitous archive material. Original 'schoolroom' little changed from 1840s and used for supervised study periods through day. Scary, until you talk to friendly boys and staff. School has thankfully moved with times (the 'dungeons' now house refurbished classrooms including ICT. Plasma screens linked to school intranet brought us abruptly back to 21st century. Smart boards everywhere.

New sixth form centre (modern space to work, relax and eat as well plus discrete IT facility) an obvious privilege for older boys. Purposeful atmosphere created by boys themselves; comfortable relationships built on mutual respect; lots of younger staff and about one third are female. Exciting plans for redeveloping site - outworn science labs as part of new complex to match wow factor of school's theatre.

Pastoral Care and Discipline

Pastoral care underpinned by tried and tested tutorial system. Part-time school counsellor very involved and offers 40 minute slots during day or an hour after school in homely sanctuary. Separate room for highly valued peer support and mentoring schemes (overseen by a sixth form tutor and counsellor). 'Drop in' arrangement every day after school manned by selected seniors – ideas 'have evolved from boys' own suggestions' and so are accepted. Sixth formers are trained and take work seriously – involvement 'makes them good at listening to others when they reach university,' claims counsellor. E-buddying and timetabled group activities also form part of scheme. PSHE (one lesson a week) covers issues such as binge drinking and drug awareness. Induction for new boys includes enjoyable residential expedition. Parents impressed by way school responds quickly to any problem they raise – 'staff always have time for me,' said one mum. Sanctions, when imposed, are seen as fair. School rules are few and straightforward. No expulsions in recent times. Long-serving staff help to uphold ethos whilst younger ones give lots of energy. Inspired multi-faith 'quiet room' recently installed for those who need 'time out' for reflection.

Pupils and Parents

Academically selective but not socially exclusive – very mixed bunch. Parents more affluent than in past but many choose QEH to 'steer sons away from more socially exclusive places' and feel it is 'a better preparation for the real world'. Parents 'delighted' with relatively small size – 'teachers really know the boys,' they report. Traditional bluecoat uniform now limited to choir members. Blazers and school tie up to year 11 and suits thereafter. Close involvement of parents is encouraged and 'Friends' association raises money for small improvements – currently 'greening' a hitherto neglected part of school site. Termly newsletters and school intranet help keep parents informed. Unpretentious boys - friendly, open and polite. Active school council meets regularly. Plenty of joint activities with girls' schools - especially Red Maids. Firm guidelines on appearance (no long hair, jewellery etc) and staff chivvy where necessary. Most boys dig into honest grub (good choices and boy sized portions) at lunch-time in baronial hall (includes gallery and organ loft) with house shields and honours boards; doubles up for whole school assemblies twice weekly. Theatre used for sixth form assembly. Knockabout area in centre of school known as 'the yard' where boys can let off steam. Generous lot – raised over £10K in a year for various charities. Thriving OBs society; former pupils include film star Hugo Weaving; BBC soccer commentator Jonathan Pearce; Ashley Pharoah - writer and creator of TV's 'Life on Mars' series; William Friese-Greene – pioneer in cinema, portrait photographer and inventor; Mike Smith – director of Columbia records.

Entrance

Selective; exam taken in January for entry to years 7 and 9 (about 15 enter at latter stage -- mainly from prep schools). Two applicants for every place at 11 and school draws from about forty schools across Bristol area. Popularity soared after decision taken to dispense with Saturday lessons. Red Maids' siblings tend to favour QEH. Exam comprises VR test (multiple choice) -- 50 minutes; 50 minutes non-verbal reasoning test (multiple choice) -- 30 minutes maths -- 30 minutes creative writing exercise -- 20+ minutes interview. Nice of them to let

one know -- many don't. Entry to sixth form - you need at least 6 grade Bs at GCSE plus headteacher's reference. Pick up a few from comprehensives at this stage.

Exit

Nearly all year 11 pupils go into sixth form (a few leave for financial reasons) and most go on to higher education. Number to Oxbridge varies annually; plenty to medical schools and Russell group universities.

Money Matters

In a city which had the highest take-up of the former government AP scheme, QEH has always sought to help the less fortunate. About 15 per cent of boys benefit from school's own (means tested annually) assisted places scheme. A very few receive 100 per cent support. Academic (six) and music (four) scholarships awarded at 11 and 13. Ogden sixth form scholarships. Historically, frugal when it comes to spending but new development plans set to change that.

Remarks

An academic school with 'plenty of heart'. 'Open, honest boys who work and play hard,' say staff. Atmosphere reminded us of bygone days though school has moved with the times. Teachers 'go the extra mile' in terms of extra-curricular involvement. The importance given to boys' welfare strikes us as exceptional and parents we spoke to had 'no regrets' about choosing QEH.